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OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION: REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARDS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME/UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND, THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND AND THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

Annual report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund to the Economic and Social Council

1. In its decision 1997/11 of 18 March 1997, the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) took note of the report of the Executive Director of UNICEF entitled "Annual report to the Economic and Social Council" (E/ICEF/1997/10 (Part I)) and of the document entitled "Follow-up to the decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1996" (E/ICEF/1997/4). The Executive Board also decided to transmit those reports, together with the comments made on them, to the Council for consideration at its 1997 substantive session.

2. Part one of the present document contains the first-mentioned report; the second is contained in part two. The comments of the Executive Board on the first report are found in the report of the Executive Board on its second regular session of 1997 (E/1997/32 (Part II), paras. 62-69); the comments on the second report are found in the report of the Executive Board on its first regular session of 1997 (E/1997/32 (Part I), paras. 90-96).

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Part one

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL*

* Originally issued under the symbol E/ICEF/1997/10 (Part I).

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1. During 1996, UNICEF continued implementation of measures called for in the series of triennial policy reviews of operational activities carried out by the General Assembly, culminating in General Assembly resolution 50/120. In this regard, the Executive Director views the triennial reviews as a continuum allowing for consolidated reporting on implementation of the series of related and progressive resolutions.

2. UNICEF implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120 is fully in accordance with the management process prepared pursuant to paragraph 52 of the resolution and contained in annex II of the report on "Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: Progress on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120" (E/1996/64). Accordingly, this report gives due attention to capacity-building, field- and regional-level coordination, and resources. The Council will review these areas at its 1997 substantive session on the basis of a progress report by the Secretary-General. Since UNICEF has contributed to that report, and to avoid duplication, the present report focuses on aspects specific to UNICEF.

A. Programme matters

Programme approach

3. UNICEF has had a country programme approach for more than 20 years and, drawing on its experience, has been in the forefront of inter-agency discussions on wider adoption. During 1996, following inter-agency consultations, the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) agreed to an updated version of the common understanding of the programme approach, which is now part of the CCPOQ Operational Activities Reference Manual. Furthering adoption of the programme approach at the field level has proven most successful when the host Government itself has introduced a programme approach and all partners draw on a common assessment of the country situation. The pace of further adoption of the programme approach will depend on the extent to which members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) and other partners have developed fully their own programme approaches and have provided field offices with sufficient guidance and guidelines for engagement with each other and with government partners.

Harmonization of programme cycles and programming procedures

4. The harmonization of programme cycles among JCGP members has continued, with good results. Currently, 27 country programme cycles are harmonized, 54 will be so by 1999 and 26 are likely to be harmonized shortly thereafter. Eight countries are special cases that are unlikely to harmonize programme cycles in the near future. As a result, by their next programming cycle, more than 90 per cent of country programmes will be harmonized. The JCGP Subgroup on Harmonization of Programming Policies and Procedures will continue to monitor

the situation, striving for 100 per cent harmonization or as close as practical.

5. Implementation of the Common Country Assessment (CCA), an exercise to rationalize the collection of information at the country level, is proceeding rapidly. In March 1996, an Executive Directive calling for further action, accompanied by a joint letter of exhortation from the heads of the JCGP agencies, was sent to all field offices. The directive summarized the CCA process, i.e., definition, role and scope as well as purpose, content and periodicity, and further requested input from the field as a prelude to developing more detailed guidelines. In late 1996, UNICEF issued further guidance to field offices through a note developed collaboratively by JCGP. Final guidelines for CCA will be developed in early 1997 using a "countries of experimentation" approach, taking into account best practices in the field and involving the full participation of field representatives.

Common manual

6. As reported on fully in the report on "Follow-up to the decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1996" (E/ICEF/1997/4), CCPOQ has completed preparation of its Operational Activities Reference Manual. It has now been forwarded to all field offices and will serve as a system-wide complement to other documents produced by individual funds, programmes and agencies.

Capacity-building

7. National capacity-building and execution, through government and other national partnerships, have long been cornerstones of UNICEF programmes. It is only in this manner that programme sustainability and the timely phasing out of the direct involvement of UNICEF is practical. This approach has worked successfully in even the most difficult of circumstances.

8. Recognizing the need for the United Nations system to play a lead role in this area, CCPOQ has developed guidelines for national execution that have as key objectives the enhancement of capacity-building, self-reliance, the building of national institutions, effective management and sustainability. These guidelines stress enhancement of self-reliance and the strengthening of national institutions through, inter alia, improvement of civil service structures and conditions, conditions of employment, etc., and note that measures to overcome limitations in national capacities need to be linked to operational plans and timetables for longer-term remedial action by Governments themselves.

9. The UNICEF approach, based on the country programme and national programmes of action linked to national development programmes, has provided a coherent national and subnational framework for the delivery of services and, thereby, has served to identify areas requiring further capacity-building. The decentralization of authority for the country programme process should further the integration of UNICEF-supported programmes into domestic systems, ensuring that national priorities are paramount. By requiring a country-level choice of partners, capacity-building is expected to enhance the decentralization of programming to the field level. With the adoption of initiatives such as 20/20, follow-up to international conferences, the Special Initiative for Africa and

the Sectoral Investment Programmes of the World Bank, UNICEF is moving towards broader system development, sectoral policy-making and capacity-building. Part of the capacity-building strategy could require consideration of possible trade offs between longer-term capacity-building and achievement of more immediate operational targets. In addition, much of UNICEF advocacy work is designed to empower individuals and societies to take control of the management and direction of the provision of basic social services.

10. Capacity-building at the national level was an important aspect of the multiple indicator cluster survey methodology, developed by UNICEF in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and with assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (United States). This survey methodology provided the basis for much of the information gathered for use in reporting on progress at mid-decade on implementation of the goals of the World Summit for Children and included a component for strengthening capacity for the collection and analysis of statistical data in many national statistics offices.

Monitoring and evaluation activities

11. Within the JCGP group, the "Common Guidelines on Monitoring and Evaluation" are now finalized and are being shared with country offices. These guidelines were developed after an extensive review of procedures by the JCGP agencies and provide a single set of parameters, based on common terminology and concepts as defined in earlier work done by JCGP. The harmonized guidelines cover project- and programme-level monitoring and evaluation and include recommended guidelines for mid-term reviews of country programmes.

12. A meeting of the Inter-agency Working Group on Evaluation held in Geneva, in November 1996, provided a forum for exchange of information and proposals for enhanced coordination among evaluation offices of the United Nations system and Bretton Woods institutions. Topics discussed included performance rating systems in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and in the World Bank, institutional issues related to the functioning of evaluation offices and issues of oversight and harmonization.

13. In 1996, a new more user-friendly Windows-based version of the evaluation database was released to all UNICEF offices. An updated CD-Rom will be released by mid-1997 containing information on UNICEF evaluations and studies from 1987 through 1996. This has the potential to be a very powerful tool for offices to learn from programme experiences and findings in other countries. The database is also available to other United Nations agencies to share lessons learned.

14. The UNICEF Evaluation Unit has also reinforced its dialogue with the DAC Expert Group on Evaluation, in coordination with the Office of Strategic Planning and Evaluation of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This has led to the development of a programme performance measurement system. Two tracks are being considered for further development of this approach: incorporation of a rating system in the Programme Manager System (ProMS) and in annual progress reporting. Further consultation is being held with UNDP to facilitate a harmonized approach within the JCGP system.

15. Regional thematic evaluations were undertaken by most regional offices covering the following topics: the reduction of malnutrition in South Asia; strengthening and revitalizing health systems and water, sanitation and guinea worm eradication in West Africa; alternative education for special groups in the Middle East and North Africa; education and children in especially difficult circumstances in the Americas region; and psycho-social programmes in Eastern and Southern Africa. Lessons learned from these reviews clearly reinforce the current understanding of causality and key strategies for intervention in the different sectors. The reviews also highlight overall trends in programme practice and identify aspects of programming that require further development.

16. Finally, further methodological development was undertaken on the country programme evaluation. Guidelines were refined based on the experiences over the last two years and model terms of reference were drafted. Based on this methodology, an evaluation was undertaken of the country programme of Haiti, covering the period 1992 to mid-1996. It provided insights into the changes that took place in the way the country office and programmes adapted to the changing role of the State and civil society during the different stages of the emergency.

Field and regional coordination

17. The resident coordinator system is an important element in country strategy and programme preparation and delivery as UNICEF deepens the involvement of United Nations system partners. It now contributes to all regular country programmes of cooperation being presented to the Executive Board. It has facilitated the role of Government in coordinating collaboration between UNICEF and key United Nations partners in-country, particularly among JCGP members. Where it exists, the Country Strategy Note has provided a basic tool for the coordination of United Nations activities; facilitated information sharing, implementation of the programme approach and national execution; and helped to avoid duplication and strengthen mutual support.

18. Within the resident coordinator system, and under the overall coordination of Governments, UNICEF continues to advocate for the use of field committees and thematic groups to help guide the coordination of operational activities. These committees, when functioning well, are generally led by a representative of the organization technically and operationally best suited to deal with specific themes and enjoying the full confidence of Governments.

19. UNICEF remains committed to widening the pool of candidates for appointment as resident coordinators. To this end, in August 1996, an Executive Directive was sent to all field offices highlighting the value of such appointments and strongly encouraging senior staff to apply. As a result, in November, UNICEF submitted five candidates for JCGP review. No decisions were taken at the time of finalizing the present report, and there is still only one UNICEF staff member serving as resident coordinator.

20. Increasingly, exchanges related to the resident coordinator system are also taking place at the headquarters level. The Deputy Executive Director delivered the keynote welcome address at the 1996 briefing session for first-time resident representatives/coordinators. Training programmes for new UNICEF representatives will now include briefings by the Office of United Nations

System Support and Services (OUNSSS). Appropriate UNICEF staff are participating in advanced seminars for experienced resident coordinators at the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation in Turin. The training of more than 80 country teams through workshops on management of field coordination for senior representatives of the United Nations system at the Turin Centre, and subsequent in-country training, have provided significant impetus to closer collaboration within the resident coordinator system.

21. UNICEF is participating in inter-agency missions on "Best Practices in the Functioning of the Resident Coordinator System" and related activities organized by the Operational Activities for Development Unit of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. Terms of reference for these missions were shared between funds and programmes prior to finalization. UNICEF participated in the initial mission to Costa Rica and will join in the four other missions planned as well as in the consolidation of the combined results.

22. UNICEF assessed its field offices' participation in preparation of the 1995 Annual Report of Resident Coordinators. Based on variations in levels of involvement, and following discussions with OUNSSS and the CCPOQ Working Group on the Resident Coordinator System, guidelines for the 1996 report were modified to ensure wider United Nations system participation, particularly JCGP members.

23. At the regional level, UNICEF continues to promote workshops and training, exchanges of information/lessons learned, and has close working relationships with relevant regional organizations and regional offices of international organizations.

B. Management, personnel and finance matters

Management audit systems and aid accountability

24. The internal audit services of UNICEF collaborate closely with sister United Nations agencies, particularly UNDP, on a number of initiatives such as developing databases of common audit findings, covering the same topics in management audits with a view to synchronized corrective actions, e.g. United Nations common premises, experiences in using contractors to perform internal audits, etc. There is a sharing of guidelines on audit approaches and collaboration on methodologies for risk assessment in developing audit strategies and work plans.

25. Annual meetings of representatives from all internal audit services of United Nations organizations and multilateral institutions provide an important forum for sharing experiences and learning lessons from innovative approaches. The most recent meeting had a clear focus on issues of common concern requiring joint action, including making internal audits more responsive to the needs of "clients" and developing techniques to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of internal audit services.

26. Improved accountability for aid provided directly to Governments will require enhanced auditing capacity within various state audit offices. This could reduce the burden on the UNICEF audit functions as well as on those of other United Nations bodies, the World Bank and other international financial

institutions. UNICEF is providing active leadership in this area and is encouraging initiatives in other bodies.

Harmonization of budget presentations

27. Substantive progress has been achieved in the harmonization of budget presentations, following decision 1994/R.3/6 (E/ICEF/1994/13/Rev.1) of the UNICEF Executive Board and decision 94/30 of the UNDP/United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Executive Board. A report on "Harmonization of budgets: UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF" (DP/1997/2, E/ICEF/1997/AB/L.3), submitted to the first regular session of the Board in January 1997, presented a proposed common format for presentation of the biennial support budget, a compendium of common terms and definitions and a common methodology for preparing budget estimates.

Common premises and administrative services

28. The JCGP Subgroup on Common Premises is evaluating the possibility of establishing a common premises management unit to ensure appropriate cost/benefit analysis in the selection of common premises and oversee their establishment and management. A consultant will carry out a feasibility study of four potential common premises countries in 1997. If this trial is successful, the unit will be established as a permanent feature. UNICEF remains committed to the maximization of the number of common premises with due regard to cost-effectiveness, cost-sharing and cost controls.

29. Expected outputs from the Subgroup for next year include the resolution of outstanding issues related to financial accounts; the definition of specific criteria and operational guidelines for ownership and/or eventual disposition of properties; and the establishment of operational guidelines for establishing future common premises, including, inter alia, cost-sharing, shared services, cost control, project management, partial or total disposition or enlargement, and a methodology for cost/benefit analysis. JCGP has postponed any acquisition of new common premises - except in exceptional circumstances - until the above-mentioned mechanisms are put in place.

II. FOLLOW-UP TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 50/227: FURTHER MEASURES FOR THE RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS, ANNEX I, SECTION I: FUNDING OF OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

A. Analytical assessment of the implications on operational activities of recent trends in core and other resources

30. Resource mobilization from both government and non-government sectors, particularly in the form of general resources, remains a top priority for UNICEF. (UNICEF uses the terminology "general resources" rather than "core resources" to describe voluntary contributions used for cooperation in country programmes approved by the Executive Board and allocated by formula, as well as for administrative and programme support expenditures.) In the current period of declining levels of official development assistance from many donor Governments, competing demands, increasing emphasis on bilateralism and

conditional contributions, and greater questioning of the role and effectiveness of the United Nations system, there are serious financing issues confronting the United Nations system as a whole. Although UNICEF may have suffered less than many of its sister organizations in recent years, it is by no means exempt from current resource constraints.

31. It also should be noted that National Committees for UNICEF raise more than $300 million annually directly from the public, by far the highest level of non-government income proportional to total income of any United Nations programme. This public support is for an organization that is clearly focused on all aspects of child well-being and has a distinct identity and presence.

32. The pattern of income over the five years since 1991, as set out in table 1, was characterized by an overall increase in total UNICEF resources, with general resources increasing slightly and non-emergency supplementary funds almost doubling. Emergency supplementary funds contributions, subject to much greater variability, are currently at a level greater than in 1991, but less than in any year between 1992 and 1994. In proportional terms, the share of general resources in total income has declined from 63 per cent in 1991 to 54 per cent in 1995. Non-emergency supplementary funding increased from 20 to 31 per cent in the same period, while emergency contributions decreased from 17 to 16 per cent of total income.

33. While a number of Governments are maintaining or even increasing support for UNICEF general resources activities, many are now increasing the proportion of aid funds disbursed through bilateral channels relative to their multilateral contributions. The impact of this trend is reflected in the overall proportional growth of supplementary funds compared to general resources.

34. The trend of increased emphasis by government donors on non-core contributions could distort efforts to support programmes in countries and sectors according to assessed needs and in accordance with directions from the Executive Board. Thus, for instance, 36 per cent of general resources allocated to specific geographic areas in the 1994-1995 biennium went to programmes in Africa, while only 32 per cent of supplementary funds were thus allocated. This pattern of higher proportions in general resources than in non-emergency supplementary funds for Africa appears to have become systemic. Current resource availability for African programmes will have to shift if UNICEF is to meet the targets set out in the medium-term plan for 1996-1999 (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.10), which proposed that resource allocations to Africa should remain at around 40 per cent of the total. Implementation of programmes as part of the Special Initiative for Africa will require an greater focus on Africa.

35. During 1996, general resources income is expected to fall slightly below projections in the medium-term plan. As a result, field offices were requested in an Executive Directive of September 1996 to seek cost savings in programme support/administrative budgets so that maximum commitments could be retained for programme activities. During an earlier shortfall in general resources availability in 1995, general resources allocations of global funds to many headquarters activities were cut and selected country offices were requested to slow down or actually reduce general resources expenditures. While the impact of reduced general resources availability is felt, in the first instance, by reduced administrative and programme support budgets, it could affect the

quality and quantity of programme delivery. In the extreme, reduced general resources could result in reduced programme expenditures.

36. As a result of recent trends, UNICEF is increasingly emphasizing the mobilization of general resources and has communicated this to field offices and National Committees. In a letter to National Committees, and reinforced in her statement at the 1996 annual meeting of National Committees, the Executive Director called attention to the serious nature of the problems presented by the proportional decline in general resources and asked the Committees to give preference to general resources. Also, through a letter to field offices in October 1996, representatives were asked to approach host Governments to encourage their active participation in the annual pledging conference.

B. Recommendations on increasing core resources

37. Mobilization of additional general resources for programmes is possible through several mechanisms: using existing funds more efficiently; securing a larger share from within existing resource pools; and/or developing new sources of funding. In addition, increased resources for UNICEF-type programmes, i.e., expenditure on basic social services, is possible through leveraging with partners and advocating for increased expenditures on basic social services. Compared to the needs of children, the financial resources available to UNICEF are such that it will generally serve in a catalytic or "best practices" role. The vast bulk of resources for the provision of basic social services contained within the UNICEF mandate will continue to come from national Governments and communities, supported by other development partners.

38. By increasing efficiency and strengthening management, through the Management Excellence Programme, UNICEF will maximize funds available for country programmes. Accountability, cost-effective programme delivery and timely implementation are considered of paramount importance in mobilizing income from all sources. UNICEF attaches the highest priority to reporting on programme implementation and developing reporting mechanisms and formats that fully meet the needs, inter alia, of donor Governments, National Committees and the general public. Special attention is being given to illustrating the impact of general resources-funded activities and of regional initiatives.

C. Adopted targets

39. In a period of uncertain resource availability, UNICEF has generally maintained its overall level of donor support. The financial plan for 1996-1999, contained in the medium-term plan document, forecasts modest income growth (see table 2). The plan provides projections for planning purposes and does not imply a commitment by individual donors. Income growth is expected to come primarily from the private sector. Growth in government contributions is projected at minimal levels, especially for general resources. UNICEF uses these income projections for a rolling four-year period to estimate future resource availability from various sources and as a basis for programming plans.

D. Priorities and programmes agreed by the UNICEF Executive Board

40. The future direction of UNICEF, as set out in the medium-term plan, is noted by the UNICEF Executive Board, along with comments made during the Board's discussion on the item. The plan is a flexible framework for supporting UNICEF programmes until the end of the twentieth century. It takes into account the current global trends in political, economic and social areas, considering them as both opportunities and limitations.

41. UNICEF has three principle strategies: service delivery; capacity-building; and advocacy and social mobilization. In its country programming and advocacy, UNICEF focuses on the decentralization of programmes, gender-sensitive programming, reaching vulnerable groups, learning from the programming environment, adapting strategies to country realities and regional characteristics, and incorporating the Convention on the Rights of the Child into the work of UNICEF. Strategic partnerships, based on shared goals, will be pursued with other United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), human rights organizations, parliamentarians, religious leaders, media, the private sector and communities.

42. The Executive Board has articulated priorities for action in major sectors such as health, nutrition, education, water and environmental sanitation, as well as for cross-cutting concerns such as gender, environment, urban needs and child protection. The UNICEF approach to the survival, protection and development of children looks at the broader framework of development and poverty alleviation and selects those intervention that ensure the largest and most sustainable long-term impact. The goals of the World Summit for Children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child underpin this approach. Programmes are implemented in an integrated manner and draw on a range of mutually supporting functions directly related to the well-being of children: field operational activities; emergency relief; post-conflict reconstruction; setting of norms and standards; social mobilization; support for the Convention; procurement services; fund-raising; support for NGOs and civil society; and policy analysis and dialogue. UNICEF capacity to provide these mandated services in a coherent multi-functional manner is essential to the fulfilment of its obligations as a global advocate for children and for effective and efficient programme delivery.

E. New and innovative funding sources and modalities for operational activities

43. This issue will be covered extensively in a report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly pursuant to resolution 50/227, annex I, section I, paragraph 17.

III. FOLLOW-UP TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1996/36: FOLLOW-UP TO THE MAJOR INTERNATIONAL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES AND SUMMITS, INCLUDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR RESPECTIVE PROGRAMMES OF ACTION

44. Coordinated inter-agency follow-up to the recent international conferences is taking place through three inter-agency task forces - Basic Social Services for All, Enabling Environment for Economic and Social Development, and Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods for All - as well as through the inter-agency committee following up the Beijing Fourth World Conference for Women. UNICEF is active in all four bodies. At its spring 1997 session, the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) will undertake a first comprehensive assessment of overall system-wide progress in promoting the coordinated follow-up to global conferences, including the effectiveness of the new inter-agency mechanisms, and consider further arrangements for pursuing this work within the inter-agency machinery.

45. The reports by the task forces to ACC will provide, inter alia, guidelines for the resident coordinator system, indicators for measurement of success, advocacy materials, programmes, reports on "best practices" and "lessons learned", and opportunities for cooperation and forging inter-agency partnerships. The Secretary-General will provide a report on the work of the inter-agency task forces to the 1997 substantive session of the Council pursuant to its resolution 1996/36.

46. Even before the inter-agency machinery provides system-wide guidelines for follow-up to the major international conferences and summits, UNICEF has been actively pursuing follow-up within its mandated areas of activity and competence and without prejudice to the eventual outcomes of the inter-agency process.

A. United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

47. In response to the Conference's Agenda 21, the Executive Board in 1993 requested that environmental considerations form an integral part of existing country programmes (E/ICEF/1993/14, decision 1993/14). It was considered that UNICEF programmes have always contributed to improvements of environmental conditions of children and families through the provision of clean water, sanitation and health education, household food security, primary health care services and the promotion of appropriate technologies for reducing women's workload. The Board decision also emphasized the need for promoting the active participation of children and women in environmental protection and resource management for enhancing sustainable livelihood and effective partnerships with NGOs and other United Nations agencies.

48. There has been progress in integrating environmental concepts in the work of UNICEF. Regional programmes in the Sahel, the Amazon and the Andes have given a more direct focus to these matters than traditional UNICEF programmes. Increasingly, country offices have included an analysis of the child's environment in their programming processes. Certain types of environmental activities particularly relevant to community-based action have been introduced gradually into many country programmes, i.e., environmental education, safe waste disposal and recycling, community management of water environment and

social forestry. The programming manual of UNICEF is being revised to take into account, among other things, the primary environmental care (PEC) approach. UNICEF is also developing its version of environmental impact assessment guidelines for use as a programme planning and evaluation tool.

49. Application of the PEC approach in UNICEF programmes has required innovative and unconventional efforts that are evolving only gradually to avoid spreading limited resources too broadly. Accordingly, much action has been catalytic through which a PEC strategy would enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of UNICEF programmes in health, nutrition, basic education, water and sanitation, as well as in the delivery of integrated basic services. As the role of UNICEF shifts from support for service delivery to that of a facilitator for social development, and as its programmes take a more decisive perspective on the rights of the child, the notion of sustainable development is expected to become more prominent in the policy analysis and programme planning processes.

50. Also as follow-up to Agenda 21, the UNICEF Executive Board in 1993 formally adopted a policy to integrate PEC into all UNICEF-assisted programmes, taking into account three basic elements: (a) meeting people's basic livelihood and health needs; (b) optimal use and sustainable management of natural resources; and (c) empowering local groups or communities for self-directed sustainable development. Special attention has been paid to ecologically stressed and vulnerable areas, and greater efforts are being made to reach the poorest and most vulnerable.

B. International Conference on Population and Development

51. UNICEF country offices expanded their women's health programmes with a focus on the reduction of maternal mortality. A global internal task force, including all Programme Division sections as well as regional and country offices, was formed. It works with a reference group of the main UNICEF partners in the area of safe motherhood to develop further UNICEF policy and strategy in this area and to strengthen country programming.

52. Another component of the follow-up is the integration of various components of reproductive health. In West and Central Africa, the Bamako Initiative offers opportunities for the provision of better services, including the detection and treatment of reproductive tract infections and the prevention of HIV/AIDS. In Asia and Latin America, increasing collaboration is developing with professional associations of midwives and obstetricians/gynaecologists. UNICEF is a member of the reproductive health workshop with WHO, UNFPA and the International Federation of Obstetricians/Gynaecologists. Recently, UNICEF and WHO co-sponsored a pre-Congress Training Workshop at the Triennial Congress on the International Confederation of Midwives. In Central and Eastern Europe, UNICEF works on capacity-building with women's NGOs.

53. In another area of inter-agency collaboration, UNICEF participated in the Committee for United Nations Staff Training Guidelines on the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action, as well as in the recent UNFPA-supported Meeting on Human Rights Approaches to Women's Health. UNICEF has provided all field offices with guidelines for the United Nations resident coordinator system for implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, as prepared by the Inter-Agency Task Force.

C. World Summit for Social Development

54. The close links between the Social Summit and the World Summit for Children, its reaffirmation of the World Summit goals and the strong emphasis on health, education, nutrition and water and sanitation have made it possible to view the Social Summit as part of a continuum with the implementation process for the World Summit for Children. Accordingly, at the country level, follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) is focused on activities that are part of the approved country programme.

55. This continuum has provided opportunities to strengthen and accelerate field-level action in the implementation of the World Summit for Children. In addition, the broad agenda of WSSD follow-up has helped to mobilize a wide range of actions on poverty reduction, within which progress for children can be placed. WSSD has provided a unique opportunity for UNICEF to link the previously approved goals for basic social services more closely to efforts addressing the income side of poverty and, thereby, creating a more comprehensive and mutually reinforcing anti-poverty package for action at national, regional and international levels.

56. The WSSD commitment to create legal frameworks, in accordance with constitutions, laws and procedures, to provide full respect for all human rights and to reaffirm rights set out in relevant international instruments and declarations, as well as the commitment to provide basic social services to children consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, has helped to link the Convention firmly into UNICEF programming and the process of inter-agency follow-up to international conferences. This strengthened link has supported the rights-based approach to UNICEF activities and specific issues such as exploitative and hazardous child labour.

57. The Social Summit agreement to the principles of the 20/20 initiative, and the more recent Oslo meeting on 20/20, co-sponsored by the Governments of Norway and the Netherlands and to which UNICEF provided strong technical support, together with UNDP and UNFPA, have provided a new impetus to national efforts in providing access to basic social services and poverty reduction. UNICEF has been preparing studies in several countries with the combined objectives of: (a) assessing public expenditure levels for basic social services; (b) monitoring the evolution of spending; and (c) identifying ways and means to enhance the efficiency of resource use in the social sectors. The selection of countries for the study took into account the case studies being prepared by the inter-agency task forces and the varying characteristics of programme countries. UNICEF efforts are linked to the work carried out by the UNDP Poverty Strategies Initiative, and UNDP has requested UNICEF to act as lead agency in follow-up on the 20/20 initiative.

D. Fourth World Conference on Women

58. The Executive Board has approved the focus of UNICEF on three key areas: girls' education; adolescent girls' and women's health; and children's rights and women's rights. In girls' education, the UNICEF framework for action provides a strategy for reducing gender disparities. There is coordination of donor and national government efforts in 19 sub-Saharan African countries to

ensure a coherent programme approach to girls' education; a communication strategy for girls' education, under the auspices of the Association for the Development of African Education, is currently being developed; and a mobile teacher-training programme is providing girls with access to education. There are programmes in Kenya and Zimbabwe to address gender stereotyping, and a study of factors affecting girls' access to education is planned for Chad.

59. In the area of adolescent girls' and women's health, the focus is on enhancing access to information and strengthening interventions to reduce maternal mortality rates (MMRs). Among ongoing initiatives, female genital mutilation is being addressed as a health and child rights issue, with multi-country initiatives under way in Africa; UNICEF has intensified its work with a variety of partners in Latin America to promote girls' health and to reduce MMRs; UNICEF will work with Governments in South Asia in implementing the Dhaka Declaration on the elimination of violence against women and discrimination against the girl child.

60. Several initiatives are under way in the area of rights. These include alliances to increase awareness of violence against women and children; advocacy for linkages between the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women; strengthening links between women's and children's rights; and integrating women's and children's rights into the curricula of law schools. Joint consultations and field visits by Committee members of both Conventions have identified ways of strengthening implementation of the mutually reinforcing provisions of the two Conventions.

61. The involvement of women in conflict resolution, peace-building and peace education, the protection of the rights of women and girls in conflict situations, as well as their specific health needs, were the focus of a recent meeting organized by the UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office, which was attended by United Nations agencies and NGOs. As a member of the Regional Advisory Committee on Women immediately following the Beijing Conference, UNICEF and other United Nations agencies, international development agencies and regional NGOs have met to discuss institutional support for the Caribbean Plan of Action and the national Plans of Development.

E. United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

62. At Habitat II, UNICEF joined with civil society, NGOs, local authorities, mayors, parliamentarians, children's advocates and the international community to address the plight of poor urban children. The Habitat Global Plan of Action, which includes 45 articles directly related to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, recognizes that "the well-being of children is a critical indicator of a healthy society".

63. UNICEF, in partnership with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS)/Habitat convened an "Expert Seminar on Children's Rights: Housing, Neighbourhood and Settlement". A diverse group of international officials analysed the Convention on the Rights of the Child to outline the living conditions and principles of governance necessary to achieve children's rights in urban settlements.

64. An important follow-up activity is the International Workshop on Africa's Urban Poor Child: Towards Child-Friendly African Cities, organized by UNICEF with partners, in Accra, Ghana. Within the framework of local-level compliance with the Convention, the Habitat II Agenda and Agenda 21, this workshop is to explore strategies, policy options and recommendations for African mayors and their local governance partners to improve the plight of poor children in African cities. UNICEF is also actively involved in several other events, including the UNCHS/Habitat-supported International Forum on Urban Poverty to be held in Florence, Italy, and the Urban Childhood Conference organized by the Norwegian Centre for Child Research in collaboration with the NGO Childwatch. UNICEF will advocate for children's rights in urban settlements at the Commission on Human Settlements meeting and the 1997 Earth Summit Follow-up.

IV. FOLLOW-UP TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1996/43: STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND THE BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS

65. Collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions was included in the report on "Follow-up to the decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1996" (E/ICEF/1997/4), submitted to the first regular session of the Executive Board in January 1997.

V. DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

66. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board adopt the following draft recommendation:

The Executive Board

Takes note of the "Report of the Executive Director: annual report to the Economic and Social Council" (E/ICEF/1997/10 (Part I)), and decides to transmit it to the Economic and Social Council, together with the comments made by delegations at the present session.

Table 1. UNICEF income by category
(In millions of United States dollars)

	1991		1992		1993		1994		1995	
	$	% of total	$	% of total	$	% of total	$	% of total	$	% of total
General resources	506	63	548	58	545	60	535	53	537	53
Supplementary funds	165	20	186	20	205	22	257	26	311	31
Emergencies	136	17	204	22	165	18	214	21	163	16
TOTAL INCOME	807		938		915		1006		1011	
Government	579		688		643		658		655	
Non-government	228		250		272		348		356	

Table 2. UNICEF income projections
(In millions of United States dollars)

	1996		1997		1998		1999	
	$	% of total	$	% of total	$	% of total	$	% of total
General resources	567	55	582	56	593	55	612	54
Supplementary funds	299	29	315	30	335	31	365	32
Emergencies	160	16	150	14	150	14	150	14
TOTAL INCOME	1026		1047		1078		1127	
Government	647		646		658		673	
Non-government	379		401		420		454	

Part two

FOLLOW-UP TO THE DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL AT ITS SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF 1996*

* Originally issued under the symbol E/ICEF/1997/4.

INTRODUCTION

1. At its third regular session of 1996, the Executive Board decided to include in its 1997 programme of work the follow-up to decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council (E/ICEF/1996/12/Rev.1, decision 1996/36).

2. The present report begins the process of informing the Board of the principal issues related to conclusions and follow-up of the Council's 1996 substantive session. Since it was prepared only 10 weeks after the close of the session, it is necessarily just a first step. Many of the issues emanating from the Economic and Social Council will require reflection by the UNICEF secretariat, consultation and collaboration with the United Nations Secretariat and inter-agency partners, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the regional banks, as well as follow-up action on a multi-agency basis and over an extended period. The Executive Board will revert to these issues at its second regular session in 1997 when it will discuss the annual report to the Economic and Social Council. The latter report will again be prepared in collaboration with the secretariats of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Food Programme (WFP) in accordance with an agreed common format as established in Executive Board decision 1995/5 (E/ICE/1995/9/Rev.1).

3. This report responds to Council resolution 1996/42 of 25 July 1996 which addresses progress on implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120 of 20 December 1995, in particular harmonization of budget presentations, the common manual, common premises and monitoring and evaluation.

4. This report also responds to Council resolution 1996/43 of 25 July 1996 which emphasizes that the United Nations development system and the Bretton Woods institutions should expand, whenever appropriate, their collaboration in co-financing of field programmes and projects and continue to explore innovative ways to combine and maximize their resources in support of field-level development activities.

5. The progress report on follow-up to Council resolution 1996/33 of 22 July 1996, which urges governing bodies of relevant agencies to complete their follow up to Council resolution 1995/56 in good time, can be found in document E/ICEF/1997/5. Therefore, the Board may wish to address follow-up to resolution 1996/33 under the agenda item relating to emergencies.

I. OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

A. Harmonization of programmes and procedures

6. Subsequent to the policy decision by the executive heads of the members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) in December 1995 to proceed with the Common Country Assessment, which was communicated to all field

representatives as a joint letter, UNICEF joined with UNDP, UNFPA, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and WFP in preparing guidelines for preparation of the Assessment. Defined as a process of collaboratively collecting and analysing basic data and information in order to understand a country situation, the Assessment is a powerful tool for the analysis of a country's needs and represents an important instrument for monitoring progress and results achieved in development activities. Draft operational guidelines, setting out the content and scope of the Assessment, the process for its preparation and review, steps for its implementation and reporting procedures, were sent to all UNICEF field offices in November 1996 with a request for feedback. With the responses from field offices and the involvement of field-based staff, final guidelines and determination of a common set of indicators or criteria are due for transmittal in March 1997.

7. As of March 1996, 27 countries had fully harmonized programming cycles; in 54 more, harmonization will occur by 1999; and in a further 26 countries, harmonization is possible at some point in the future. Eight countries are considered special cases where harmonization is unlikely in the short- to medium-term. Thus, by their next programming cycle, over 90 per cent of country programmes will be harmonized among the JCGP members.

8. With respect to harmonization of procedures, a common letter of guidance on payment to government staff, signed by the heads of UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and WFP, has been sent to all field offices. This communication included detailed guidelines for implementation.

B. Harmonization of budget presentations

9. The UNICEF Comptroller presented an oral progress report on budget harmonization by UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA to the Executive Board at its third regular session of 1996, as requested by the Board in decision 1996/16. Since then, collaboration has continued and progress has been achieved, taking into account the request of the Economic and Social Council to finalize the work in time for a final decision to be made by the respective Executive Boards in advance of the biennium 1998-1999. The Board will review the final product (E/ICEF/1997/AB/L.3), together with the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (E/ICEF/1997/AB/L.6), at the present session.

C. Common manual

10. The Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) has completed preparations of its Operational Activities Reference Manual. This new publication responds to the growing demand among United Nations system headquarters, regional and field staff for a compilation of the key legislation, guidelines and administrative arrangements agreed or recognized by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) for the delivery of United Nations system operational activities. The manual will serve as a system-wide

complement to other documentation produced by individual funds, programmes and agencies. The format of the manual seeks flexibility and user-friendliness, using a loose-leaf binder with ample provision for updates and additional material.

11. The manual includes the following main topics:

(a) The programme approach;

(b) Monitoring and evaluation in the context of the programme approach;

(c) Country strategy note: basic principles and procedures;

(d) National execution and implementation arrangements;

(e) Decentralization of capacities and authority;

(f) Common Country Assessment;

(g) The resident coordinator system, including role and functioning, criteria for selection, annual reports and UNDP financial support for resident coordinators;

(h) Training;

(i) Programme coordination, including the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Operations Centre (UNOPS), United Nations Volunteers, follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development and drug abuse control;

(j) General Assembly resolutions 50/120 of 20 December 1995, 47/199 of 22 December 1992 and 44/211 of 22 December 1989;

(k) The United Nations system.

12. UNICEF distributed copies of the manual to all field offices and key headquarters personnel in mid-November 1996, requesting feedback and comments for further updates. Making the texts available in other languages will be explored by CCPOQ, as will the feasibility of creating an Internet home page for the manual.

D. Common premises and administrative services

13. An informal session was conducted during the Economic and Social Council's 1996 operational segment in order to brief delegates on the status of common premises and services and apprise them of substantive issues pending clarification, including ownership, rental options, apportioning of operating costs and common service charges, and future common premises sites. The JCGP subgroup on common premises will be hiring a management unit comprising two Professional staff to work with UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP, initially for a

one-year period, to deal with project management, defining roles and levels of reporting responsibility, conducting cost-benefit analyses of potential common premises projects and shared services, and examining other issues related to the JCGP framework.

E. Monitoring and evaluation

14. UNICEF collaborated with its partners in the JCGP Working Group on Evaluation and Monitoring to produce common guidelines on evaluation focusing on project evaluation policies, concepts, terminology and products; and monitoring products for both projects and country programmes. These were sent to all UNICEF field offices in late 1996 and will be used and applied throughout the organization. This should ensure closer coordination and collaboration on evaluations at field level.

15. The evaluation offices of the funds and programmes work closely together through an ongoing dialogue and exchange of information in such areas as database development, training and common manuals. In mid-November 1996, a meeting of the Inter-agency Working Group on Evaluation, an informal gathering of the heads of all United Nations system evaluation offices, discussed common policies and harmonization of evaluation capacities. Follow-up to the common guidelines was also discussed, as well as the promotion of joint evaluations among JCGP members at field level, in compliance with recommendations of the Economic and Social Council.

II. COLLABORATION WITH THE BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS

A. Collaboration at global level

16. During its high-level segment on operational activities of the United Nations for international cooperation, the Economic and Social Council discussed collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions and adopted resolution 1996/43, on strengthening collaboration between the United Nations development system and the Bretton Woods institutions. In the resolution, the Council, inter alia, and of particular interest to UNICEF, suggests that strengthened collaboration requires an integrated approach encompassing a closer dialogue at the intergovernmental level; elaborated on relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 50/227; encouraged strengthening of existing mechanisms and exploring new mechanisms of cooperation between the Bretton Woods institutions and United Nations bodies; stressed collaboration on the basis of country-driven activities; emphasized that the United Nations development system and the Bretton Woods institutions should expand collaboration in co-financing of field programmes and projects; stressed the need to take into account the exchange of experiences and lessons learned; and stressed that staff exchanges and information sharing, in particular on evaluation methodologies and results, should be encouraged in the course of work.

17. The Council's resolution serves to reaffirm the general directions already provided by the Executive Board and to support ongoing UNICEF initiatives. In the Executive Director's annual report to the Economic and Social Council (E/ICEF/1996/10 (Part II)), the Board received a complete overview of the relationship between UNICEF and the World Bank, including collaboration in policy matters and in operational activities at country level. The report concluded that there is considerable potential for enhanced collaboration with the World Bank. It also stated that policy dialogue, joint programme missions, collaborative programme development and implementation, joint working groups and participation in consultative groups should continue and intensify within a relationship of mutual respect and partnership. This process continues.

18. Together with the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, UNICEF participated in a United Nations senior officials' working group on strengthening collaboration between the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions. This group focused its attention on countries facing special circumstances; the exchange of information and data in key areas for policy analysis; the exchange of information on planned research and policy studies on key development issues, with special emphasis on environment and sustainable development; and strengthening country-level collaboration and policy coordination. Its conclusions and recommendations highlighted the need for

(a) Cooperation and coordination on emergency early warning systems;

(b) Closer coordination during emergency situations and in post-conflict recovery activities;

(c) The possible nomination of task managers within the United Nations system to pursue coordination with the Bretton Woods institutions in areas not covered by the inter-agency task forces on follow-up to international conferences;

(d) Establishment of a research and policy studies information exchange mechanism within the framework of ACC;

(e) Better and more constant communication between headquarters coordinating mechanisms and their equivalents in the field;

(f) The possibility of a general agreement between the United Nations system as a whole and the Bretton Woods institutions covering general guidelines for cooperation;

(g) Active joint participation at the outset in developing country-level sectoral plans, programmes and projects;

(h) Country-level policy dialogues and increased information sharing;

(i) Participation of the Bretton Woods institutions in the country strategy note process;

(j) Greater compatibility in procedures, rules and regulations.

These points provide the basis for further collaborative follow-up within the framework of the senior officials' group.

B. Collaboration at field level

19. With the World Bank and UNICEF participating in all three of the inter-agency task forces following up on recent international conferences, the partnership has been replicated through system-wide, inter-agency coordination at the field level. Thematic groups, mirroring and building on those established at the ACC level, have already been established in China, Egypt, El Salvador, Haiti, India, Kazakstan, Lebanon, Madagascar, Nigeria and Turkey. Through these new structures, the World Bank and UNICEF are working within system-wide groups at the country level to carry out programme planning and development for, inter alia, the basic social services sectors, water and sanitation and gender issues.

20. In Africa, collaboration between UNICEF and the World Bank is proceeding on a country-by-country basis with an agreed consensus on the importance of poverty reduction, human resources development, HIV/AIDS, health systems reform and community-based education systems. UNICEF is active in the design of many of the Bank's recent sector investment programmes. The Bank and UNICEF are working together with UNDP on poverty monitoring as part of an overall priority on country-level poverty analysis and analytical capacity. Joint collaborative health sector reform has been pursued in Mali, Uganda and Zambia. The World Bank and UNICEF have developed essential drugs programmes in Burkina Faso and the United Republic of Tanzania. There is joint collaboration on early childhood development programmes in Kenya and Uganda. In the education sector, the Bank and UNICEF are collaborating in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali and Uganda. The Bank and UNICEF, with participation from other United Nations entities, are carrying out public expenditure reviews in several countries, including Ethiopia, Uganda and Zambia. Much of the joint work by UNICEF and the Bank in Africa now falls within the framework of activities included in the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa, a relationship which is compatible with the sectoral investment process, and will improve accountability and strengthen field-level collaboration.

21. The notable feature of UNICEF collaboration with the World Bank in the Americas is the community-managed social services approach to the provision of urban basic services. Pioneered through a $70 million Bank-funded programme in Guatemala, the modalities developed are being adapted to a basic services programme in Venezuela. It is expected that the approach will soon be extended to other programmes in the region. In Central and Eastern Europe, the

Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States, the World Bank is supporting a UNICEF/International Child Development Centre programme for poverty and social monitoring in these transitional economies.

22. An April 1996 meeting between UNICEF and World Bank country representatives and technical staff in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, to discuss programmes and programming in the education and health sector within the context of the Special Initiative on Africa, led to a follow-up meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, on 14-15 November 1996. The latest meeting aimed to exchange information on collaboration in the region and at country levels; identify generic and specific areas for extending collaboration in social development and poverty reduction, particularly in the sectors of health and basic education; agree on specific follow-up actions; and develop closer contacts between UNICEF and Bank staff. A similar meeting is proposed for the West and Central Africa region.

23. A UNICEF/World Bank water and environmental sanitation meeting was also held in Nairobi in early November. Following discussions on programmes and operations, and not precluding joint activities in other countries of the region, five countries were identified for intensified collaboration: Ethiopia, Malawi, Madagascar, Mozambique and Uganda. A note of consensus was agreed between the two parties calling for specific collaboration and coordinated action in support of Governments in the following areas: supporting national development frameworks; developing sectoral strategies and plans leading to identification of programmes; piloting innovative strategies; capacity-building; information exchange; regular coordination meetings; and support for programme implementation and operation. Specific arrangements will be made at the country level, where appropriate, between Governments, UNICEF and the World Bank.

24. Although UNICEF field offices will formulate country-specific collaboration strategies, with policy and technical support from the regional offices and New York headquarters, the areas of greatest future potential include: improved information exchange, joint analysis and research and policy dialogue; UNICEF participation in Bank-financed studies or surveys; the consultative group process; preparation and implementation of sectoral investment programmes and/or projects; and World Bank utilization of UNICEF procurement services. While programme collaboration is generally well advanced, the Bank and UNICEF are now focusing on developing standard administrative and financial arrangements to help field offices to develop modalities.

25. UNICEF will continue to report to the Executive Board periodically on collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions under an appropriate agenda item.